



PRESS RELEASE

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IRS – Criminal Investigation

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Oregon Woman Pleads Guilty in \$1.2 Million Federal Income Tax Refund Fraud Scheme

Conspired with Others to Prepare and File at Least 224 False Income Tax Returns

An Oregon woman pleaded guilty today to one count of conspiracy to defraud the government with respect to claims, one count of wire fraud and one count of aggravated identity theft for running a federal income tax refund fraud scheme, announced Acting Assistant Attorney General Caroline D. Ciruolo of the Justice Department's Tax Division, U.S. Attorney Billy J. Williams of the District of Oregon and Special Agent in Charge Teri Alexander of the Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation (IRS-CI).

Danyelle Calcagno, 41, admitted to filing at least 224 false federal income tax returns that fraudulently claimed a total of \$1,220,246 in tax refunds, generally between \$3,500 and \$7,000 per return. Calcagno filed the fraudulent tax returns using Internet access at Portland-area hotels to disguise the source of filing. Calcagno filed the false tax returns using the names and social security numbers of other individuals obtained directly and through recruiters, including Latisha L. Simmons, 36, of Phoenix, Arizona.

Calcagno directed the IRS to deposit the income tax refunds into bank accounts and onto stored value debit cards that she could access and control in order to divide the proceeds of the fraud and make it more difficult for law enforcement to identify Calcagno as the filer of the false tax returns. Calcagno received at least \$25,000 in fraudulently obtained income tax refunds into her own bank accounts.

Calcagno faces a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years in prison on the conspiracy charge, 20 years in prison on the wire fraud charge and a mandatory term of two years in prison on the aggravated identity theft charge, which will be in addition to any other term of imprisonment she receives. Calcagno also faces financial penalties and a term of supervised release. As part of her plea agreement, Calcagno agreed to pay restitution to the IRS in the amount of \$742,754.

In October 2015, Simmons was sentenced to 39 months in prison after pleading guilty to one count of wire fraud, one count of false claims against the government and one count of aggravated identity theft. According to her plea agreement, Simmons filed more than 50 false tax returns with the IRS that fraudulently claimed more than \$400,000 in refunds.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Ciruolo, U.S. Attorney Williams and Special Agent in Charge Alexander thanked special agents of IRS-CI, who investigated this case and Trial Attorney Leslie A. Goemaat of the Tax Division and Assistant U.S. Attorney Quinn P. Harrington of the District of Oregon, who are prosecuting the case.

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